

New England Science Symposium Frequently Asked Questions

1) What are the guidelines for NESS abstract submission?

Abstracts submitted to the New England Science Symposium should not exceed 400 words total across all sections. Should an abstract exceed the word count, it will be returned to the applicant with a request to edit their submission below the word count. (Please note that lead author and institution, academic background, institution where the research was conducted, co-authors and affiliations, title, category and funding sources are not included in the word count) For reference, find an example [here](#) of how abstracts will appear to the NESS Planning Committee.

2) Do I need permission from my PI or co-authors to submit an abstract?

Yes. Never submit an abstract without prior approval from your PI or research sponsor.

3) Can two co-authors present together?

Yes, two co-authors can present their research together. One co-author will be responsible for submission and communication with the NESS administration, the second co-author should register as an attendee. Follow [this link](#) for the NESS attendance registration. Please make sure to acknowledge NESS administration at NESS@hms.harvard.edu about presenting together and further guidance.

4) Can I submit research to NESS that has already been published?

Research that has been published prior to the deadline for abstract submission will not be considered for the NESS.

5) What should I expect from attending to NESS?

The NESS is an invigorating experience making students feel welcomed while emboldening them to explore curiosities and employ their voice in biomedical and health-related research. Most NESS participants leave with a sense of belonging to a larger scientific community and a validation that there are others with similar life experiences sharing their journey to impact healthcare, biomedicine and science. This validation is often cathartic and empowering, endowing a scientific confidence that can be very beneficial as attendees return home. This is a great opportunity to connect with peers and professionals in your field of interest, and also to see the research being done across the country.

6) Do you have any tips for a new student who is attending to NESS for the first time?

This experience is about expanding your network and creating a community of supportive peers and advisors who may offer advice at every junction of your career. Make sure you take advantage of this opportunity; connect with others and ask questions!

7) How will I get to the NESS? Are there any suggestions around public transportation?

Please see “Directions to the NESS” on the NESS webpage.

8) Why does the NESS include such a wide-range of academic levels?

The conference attendees range from college and post-baccalaureate students to medical and graduate students to postdoctoral researchers. There are high quality researchers at each level and opportunities to network and learn from a cohort of individuals that span the academic spectrum.

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9) What types of projects will be presented at the symposium?

The categories for submitting an abstract are Public Health, Epidemiology or Biostatistics; Microbiology, Immunology, Genetics or Molecular Biology; Cellular Biology, Neuroscience, Biochemistry or Physiology, Bioinformatics, Physics, Chemistry or Engineering, Clinical or Social Science (including Translational Research). These categories are intentionally broad to accommodate a variety of research topics. The committee does consider all abstracts irrespective of field or focus.

10) Are there awards given for presentations?

There will be awards for outstanding oral and poster presentations in various disciplines and categories: Ruth and William Silen, M.D. Awards, Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center Awards, Postdoctoral Awards, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Department of Neonatology Award, TACS BIO Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine Award, American Cancer Society Awards, and Predicine Translational Research Award.

11) Who will be judging the presentations?

NESS judges are professionals from academia, the biopharmaceutical industry, government and the private sector who volunteer their time for the next generation of scientists. We do not disclose the list of judges prior to the symposium.

12) What are the judges looking for in a winning oral/poster presentation?

Your research will be judged on quality of research, scientific rigor, impact as well as your ability to communicate these points. NESS not only provides an opportunity to present your ideas to your peers and the scientific community, but also the chance to hone your presentation skills. A good research project will have a clear hypothesis, stated methods for testing the hypothesis, and clearly demonstrated results.

13) What should I wear?

There are many opportunities to network at NESS. Your attire should be compliant with these opportunities. That being said it is also a very long day, comfortable business attire is recommended.

14) Will there be food available?

A continental breakfast will be offered in the morning, and sandwiches will be offered for lunch. Please reach out to the NESS administration after you have applied to notify us of any dietary restrictions you may have. Water is available throughout the conference center and will be supplied at various locations. Please make a concerted effort to bring a re-usable water bottle to help us limit the footprint of the NESS!

15) Can I bring a guest to the NESS?

You are welcome to bring guests; however, they must register for the NESS as attendants. Follow [this link](#) for the NESS attendance registration.

16) Can I make changes to the abstract once I have submitted it?

An invitation to present at the symposium is based on your submitted abstract. Only minor changes are allowed and must be consistent with the spirit of the argument presented in the original abstract.